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Jim J.

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COR-0646

21 October 1999

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Trip Report - CORONA Meeting, 14-16 October 1999

Mr. Kiefer, [redacted] and I attended meetings in [redacted] on 14-15 October. Mr. Kiefer and I went on to [redacted] for further meetings on 16 October.

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MEETINGS IN PALO ALTO

1. Shepherd Committee: The main purpose of this meeting was to reconvene the special Shepherd Committee [redacted] Kiefer, Shepherd, Plummer O'Green, Levinson and [redacted] others present including Ed Green and [redacted]. The Committee was briefed by an Itak EE review group headed by their head research man, [redacted] on the results of its two week review of the project as managed by Walt Levinson. In briefest summary the Committee concluded from this rather barren review and from other reports as follows:

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a. Investigation as to the cause of the film failure is inconclusive.

b. Further testing of film and camera operation should be conducted at the Arco and Ramco high altitude chambers with particular emphasis on the issue of brittleness of the film at high altitude. Cameras numbers 9 and 12 should be used initially, but the testing would be broadened to cover all available cameras as soon as possible.

c. Re-entry problems should continue to be investigated with particular emphasis on the reliability of the rockets.

d. The committee accepted the following specific fixes for the next flight:

- (1) 10 pounds of 1188 film
- (2) Leader - A minimum of 4 wraps on supply spool when ready for liftoff.
- (3) High temperature armature in cassette motor.
- (4) Flanged exit roller.
- (5) Full radiation shield over film path.
- (6) Proven light tight ablative shell.
- (7) Approved recovery body heaters.
- (8) Additional camera instrumentation.
- (9) Torque motor on supply for hold down during ascent phase.
- (10) Modified guillotine and light seal
- (11) Cut away foam in recovery bucket.

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e. Having operated successfully in two Bessco chamber tests under simulated conditions (it is the only camera to have succeeded) it was decided to fly camera number 10 on target date of 27 October unless the committee decided prior to firing that the intervening tests surfaced problems which would make this inadvisable.

2. Acceptance of payload: By delegation BMD has been accepting the payloads for us from LMSB. In view of our more active technical participation in the program through the Shepherd Committee and in view of the Comsey report submitted recently relative to LMSB readiness procedures, it was agreed by BMD and LMSB that [redacted], assisted by an officer designated by BMD, would accept the payloads on the next two flights. In doing so [redacted] will go beyond the requirements of a purely legal acceptance and, to the extent possible, ensure that all fixes agreed upon have, in fact, been properly made and that the camera and film transported are properly operating prior to launch. On the next flight [redacted] will be joined by Mr. Green to review the film handling procedures at Vandenberg prior to the flight.

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3. Role of Colonel Murphy: It was agreed by [redacted] and Plummer that [redacted] might be of more assistance to LMSB and ourselves if in addition to his other duties he:

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a. Assume the [redacted] reporting responsibility and by cable twice a week give us a detailed report as to technical developments.

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b. Become familiar with the problems surrounding acceptance to the end that he rather than [redacted] perform acceptance on our behalf during the 1960 program.

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4. Cost of Fixes: [redacted] advised that through October probably all black extra costs incurred as a result of the failures could be absorbed in the present funding of the 1959 CORONA program. However, likely on about 1 November overruns would start occurring and the question was raised for [redacted]'s attention as to whether these overruns should be picked up in the 1960 CORONA prime contract or charged as overruns to the 1959 program. (Since that time we have learned that Itak has to date an additional overrun of approximately [redacted] in the 1959 program.)

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#### MEETINGS AT BMD

5. The following matters were covered at [redacted] with [redacted] and [redacted]

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a. Organization: The organization of [redacted] as it affects CORONA was reviewed as shown by the attached chart.

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b. CORONA Scheduling Questions:

- (1) Turn around times have not been improved sufficiently to permit the scheduling of more than 2 shots per month during 1960.
- (2)
- (3) The new GE Mark III ablative shell (substitution of nylon for plastic) will probably not be used. If it is adopted its testing will be accomplished in regular CORONA shots.
- (4) The improved Agema will probably be available in March, for operational use in April.

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CONTINUATION OF SHEPHERD COMMITTEE

It was agreed that this would be continued on an informal basis until after the next firing and at that time a recommendation would be made to Mr. Bissell and to General Ritland as to its future role.

At the end of the day we had a brief meeting with General Ritland at which the present status of the program was reviewed.

Chief, Development Branch  
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